

# **THE KUWAIT QUESTION**

**Letter**

**Adressed by H.E.Tariq Aziz**

**Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign  
Minister of The Republic of Iraq**

**To  
The Ministers of Foreign  
Affairs  
of all Countries in the  
World**

**Baghdad  
4 September, 1990**



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## FOREWORD

On 4 September 1990, Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq, addressed a letter to the Foreign Ministers of the Arab World and of the World at large. The letter offers a documented presentation of historical facts and evidence about Kuwait, its historical, geographical and human ties with Iraq, and of the role played by British imperialism in severing this part from Iraq and turning it into an artificial entity, under British hegemony, in order to deprive Iraq from its natural and historical access to the waters of Arab Gulf.

In its second part, the letter describes the conspiratorial role played against Iraq by the former rulers of Kuwait at the instigation of the United States and its allies.

The letter also reviews the events preceding the 2nd of August 1990, and the developments ensuing until the 4th of September, the date on which it was signed.



## Excellency

## Greetings

Amidst the developments witnessed in the Arab Gulf region, I find it necessary and useful to present some of the facts which I believe will help you to understand the background to the events that have occurred in this region.

Iraq, is known to have always been a political entity and the seat of many states throughout millenia. It has always been a coastal state and a major trading centre. The small village established some two centuries ago on the banks of the Arab Gulf under the name of "**Kuwait**", an Iraqi term for "a small settlement of people", had remained throughout the nineteenth century and up to **the First World War**, an Iraqi **Qadhaa'** (district) belonging to the province of Basrah. Under Ottoman administrative law, Kuwait was an integral part of Iraq, subject to the Province of Basrah.

In 1897, the governor of Basrah, Muhsin Pasha, informed the Sheikh of Kuwait, Mubarak al-Sabah, of

the Sultan's decree appointing him as Qa'im-Maqam (district administrator) of the Qadhaa' of Kuwait, a district of the Province of Basrah. By then, Mubarak had been instigated by the British to kill his two elder brothers, Mohammed and Jarrah, who had opposed the British plan to turn Kuwait into an entity under British dominance.

In 1899, Britain goaded Mubarak al-Sabah into signing a secret agreement under which the British were to provide him with protection even though he was a vassal of the Ottoman Empire and, accordingly, had no authority to sign any international accord. The agreement was therefore strongly rejected by the Ottoman Sultan, which forced Mubarak to retreat and declare his allegiance and subordination to the Ottoman Sublime Porte in 1901.

Britain never ceased these attempts, but continued to establish bases in various parts of the Arab Gulf in order to consolidate its colonial grip over this region, the strategic importance of which had increased both militarily and politically, within the framework of the competition with the Ottoman Empire, and economically as it constituted an important trade route and was known by the British to contain vast oil reserves. In order to secure the



interests of the British Empire by weakening all major states in the region, Britain focused its influence on Kuwait and drew artificial boundaries as they did later, together with their French ally, in the **Sykes-Picot Agreement** of 1917. By so doing Britain

pernitiously severed a part of Iraq in a manner that deprived a country ancient in its civilization, and great in its land and population, of its natural access to the waters of the Arab Gulf, the access which it had possessed throughout history.

It was through such artificial colonial means that an artificial entity, called Kuwait, was first created under British domination and given artificial boundaries which have no historical or geographical foundations.

Since its establishment in 1921, the State of Iraq has refused to accept this artificial entity. All successive Iraqi governments continued to demand the return of this severed part of Iraq and historical and geographical justice be done to Iraq to guarantee its commercial and economic interests and provide it with the requirements necessary for the defence of its national security. This was the position adopted by

successive Iraqi governments, despite the fact that the Iraqi regime at the time was closely linked to Britain.

Britain had also vigorously opposed any project which would bring the one people of Iraq and Kuwait close together and in coastout contact with each other. The project to provide Kuwait with water from Shatt al-Arab, the Kuwait railway project, the project to establish an Iraqi port in Kuwait City were all rejected. These projects continued to meet with British procrastination and/or outright rejection throughout the period from the early 1920s to the early 1960s.

Then Britain consistently pressurized Iraq into accepting the fait accompli. When the British government forced the Prime Minister of Iraq in 1932 to exchange letters with the British Commissioner in Baghdad, regarding the demarcation of the boundaries on the basis of the draft agreement proposed between the Ottoman and British governments; which had remained unsigned because of the outbreak of the World War I, the Iraqi House of Representatives refused, in its capacity as the country's legislative authority, to ratify the said letters.

During the 1930s, popular demand increased for the return of Kuwait to Iraq. The national press adopted those demands and began supporting them with articles and historical documents affirming the inevitable return of Kuwait to Iraq. In 1933, the British Political Agent in Kuwait, Colonel Dixon, warned, in his letters to the British Political Resident in the Gulf, against any rapprochement between the people in Kuwait and Iraq, and called for their separation.

In 1940, the ruler of Kuwait replaced the Iraqi administration of the post office in Kuwait with British staff. In 1945, the Iraqi school curricula applied in Kuwaiti schools were replaced by Egyptian curricula.

**King Ghazi**, the second monarch of Iraq, supported enthusiastically the necessity of the unification of Kuwait with Iraq. He expressed his desire to visit Kuwait in return to an earlier visit made to Iraq by Sheikh Ahmed al-Sabah in 1932. Britain, however, did not encourage the visit, and endeavored to prevent Iraq and Kuwait from reaching any agreement.

In April 1938, **Mr. Tawfiq al-Suwaidi**, Iraq's then Foreign Minister, informed the British ambassador

in Baghdad , Mr. Peterson, that:"**the Anglo-Ottoman Agreement** of 1913 had recognised Kuwait as a district belonging to the province of Basrah, and since sovereignty over Basrah had been transferred from the Ottomans to the state of Iraq, then that sovereignty should include Kuwait as provided for in the agreement of 1913. Iraq, therefore, does not recognise any change in the status of Kuwait.

The Iraqi popular demand for the return of Kuwait to Iraq was met with wide favourable response from the population in Kuwait. The Kuwaiti youth took an active part in the call for Kuwaiti unification with Iraq. In May 1938, a group of "free Kuwaitis" submitted a petition to the Iraqi Government inviting Iraq to help them achieve their aspirations regarding the return of Kuwait to Iraq. To this end, a "**national coalition**" was established to call upon Ahmed al-Sabah, the Sheikh of Kuwait to set up a legislative council representing the free people of Kuwait. He was forced to agree to this demand. During the first session of the new Council, the members expressed their demand for the return of Kuwait to Iraq. The Council's demand displeased the ruler of Kuwait and he dissolved the Council on 21 December 1938, and waged a campaign of arrest and oppression against its members.

Nevertheless, the free people of Kuwait continued to demand the return of Kuwait to Iraq. They sent many telegrams to petition King Ghazi. One of those telegrams, which was broadcast on Baghdad radio on 7 March 1939, called upon King Ghazi to intervene, saying " Our history confirms the integration of Kuwait with Iraq. We shall live and die under the Iraqi flag. "Ghazi! help your brothers in Kuwait!".

The situation escalated into a sweeping uprising led by the youth of Kuwait against the authorities on 10 March 1939. The ruler of Kuwait had to resort to armed force to disperse the youth, a great number of whom he then arrested and imprisoned.

King Ghazi tried to intervene to secure the release of the prisoners. He warned the Sheikh of Kuwait against the continued harassment of the "free Kuwaitis". In consequence, King Ghazi and the then Iraqi Government were subjected to intense British pressure to desist from Iraqi demands for the integration of Kuwait. To this end, the British ambassador in Baghdad Mr. Peterson, had several secret meetings with King Ghazi shortly before the latter's death, in an attempt to press him to give up the claims to Kuwait. King Ghazi was killed in a mysterious accident on 5 April 1939, giving every

reason to believe that Britain was actually behind his death because of his strong advocacy of the return of Kuwait to Iraq.

Following the assassination of King Ghazi, Britain's collaborators seized power in the country. With the outbreak of **the Second World War** and the following years, Iraq and the region witnessed a series of successive changes and developements including the creation of Israel, the Arab-Israeli war and the revolution in Egypt. All these developments gave the British colonialists the pretext to concentrate their influence in Kuwait severing its political and human links with Iraq.

On 9 March 1956, while, **Sellwyn Llyod**, the British Foreign Secretary was on a visit to Baghdad attending a consultative meeting of the Permanent Council of the **Baghdad Pact**, Prime Minister **Nouri al-Said** of Iraq raised the subject of accession of Kuwait to **the Arab Union** which was being formed at the time. Llyod promised to put the matter before the British cabinet. Britain's reply, which was delivered via the British ambassador in Baghdad, Michael Wright, was that Britain was prepared to grant Kuwait independence, and Kuwait would have the freedom to

decide the question of joining the Union. In order to present Britain with a fait accompli, Iraq dispatched Deputy Prime Minister, Tawfiq al-Suwaidi, in April 1957, to Shtura in Lebanon, where Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah was staying, in order to negotiate with him about the necessity of Kuwait's accession to the Union which was to be established. That effort, however, did not produce any positive result.

Early in 1958, Prime Minister Nouri al-Said of Iraq submitted to the Baghdad Pact the necessity of the integration of Kuwait with Iraq, at a meeting attended by the representatives of Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan along with the US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, who attended the meeting as an observer.

No success was achieved at that meeting due to Britain's persistent objection. Following the establishment of the Arab Union between Iraq and Jordan on 14 February 1958, King Faisal II, joined by Prime Minister Nouri al-Said, and the Foreign Minister of the new Union, Tawfiq al-Suwaidi, raised the issue of unity with Kuwait with the British Foreign Secretary Mr. Sellwyn Llyod. The British, however, rejected the Iraqi position.

When Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah, the Sheikh of Kuwait, visited Baghdad on 10 May 1958, King Faisal II and Prime Minister Nouri al-Said, raised with him the issue of Kuwait's entry to the Arab Union. The Sheikh of Kuwait responded by saying that he had to consult the British and seek their advice on the matter.

on 5 June 1958, the Government of the Union presented a confidential note to the British Embassy in Baghdad proposing the accession of Kuwait to the Arab Union. The note stated that

the land of Kuwait had, from the point of view of international law, been under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire, as a qadhaa' (district) belonging to the province of Basrah. This sovereignty had never been subject to doubt or dispute from the point of view of either the local authorities in Kuwait or the British

Government. Indeed, the latter had recognized this fact in the Anglo-Turkish Agreement signed in London on 29 July 1913 which stated, in article 6, the right of the Sheikh of Kuwait to exercise his authority invested in him as an Ottoman district administrator subordinate to the Province of Basrah.



As a result of this, the Iraqi Government and the Government of the Arab Union became convinced that Britain was behind the obstacles preventing the achievement of this objective. This generated tension in Iraqi-British relations and led Iraq to intensify its efforts and increase its pressure upon Britain. An official note was prepared by the Iraqi Government to be published on 12 July 1958, with documented evidence supporting the necessity of Kuwait's entry into the Arab Union. But the British ambassador requested that the publication of that note be postponed and conveyed to Foreign Minister Tawfiq al-Suwaidi Britain's approval, in principle, of the idea of the entry of Kuwait into the Arab Union, provided that the details of the matter be discussed at a meeting which was set to be held in London, on 24 July 1958, between the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of the Arab Union, on the one hand and their British counterparts. On the other the meeting, however, did not take place because of the Iraqi Revolution on 14 July 1958.

In 1961, Britain decided to grant the artificial entity of Kuwait what it called "independence", a decision which prompted the then Prime Minister of Iraq to declare, in a press conference on 25 June 1961, that Iraq considered Kuwait an integral part of its territory and that Iraq does not recognize the special relationship agreement

between Britain and Kuwait which the Sheikh of Kuwait, Abdulla al-Salim al-Sabah, had signed with Colonel M.J. Meade, the British Political Resident in the Gulf, on 19 June 1961. Following that declaration, Britain deployed its armed forces in the area to

confront Iraq and protect its new creation, the so-called "State of Kuwait."

Had it not been for the mistake made by Iraq's Foreign Minister at the time, **Hashim Jawad**, when he withdrew in angry protest from the meeting of the Arab League Council, which was considering the entry of the so-called "State of Kuwait" into the League of Arab States, thereby allowing a decision to be adopted, on 20 July 1961, to accept Kuwait as a member of the Arab League, this artificial entity would have remained outside the League; and hence out of the international organizations, as the admission of a new member to the League of Arab States is subject to a unanimous vote of approval.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry issued statement on 21 July 1961, declaring that Iraq **considered decision no. 35-1777, accepting Kuwait as a member of the League of Arab States, to be a flagrant violation of the League's Charter** which stipulated that such a decision could only be adopted by unanimity. Iraq also declared the said decision to be null and void and **made clear its position that Kuwait would remain an integral part of its territory** and that Iraq would not abandon its endeavours to restore this part by all legitimate means.

The Government of the former regime in Kuwait also failed in its efforts between 1961 and late 1963 to be granted membership in the United Nations.

Following the downfall of the political regime which ruled Iraq between July 1958 and February 1963, the Prime Minister of the former Government of Kuwait

visited Baghdad in circumstances of political confusion and instability in Iraq. A joint communique was issued on the basis of the correspondence of 1932. However, the National Council of Revolutionary Command (NCRC), the highest Iraqi legislative authority according to the interim constitution of 1963, did not ratify that communique.

**This historical review shows that none of the successive governments of Iraq has accepted the severance of the Kuwaiti part from the land of Iraq or signed a border treaty with the artificial entity created therein. No constitutional law has ever been promulgated to describe the border.**

Such was the situation prevailing in Iraq by the time of the Revolution of 17-30 July 1968 . The revolutionary government leading Iraq since that date has been keen, under instruction from **President Saddam Hussein**, to settle this issue in a manner that would secure for Iraq a reasonable measure of its historical rights and remove at least a limited part of the injustice done to it since the beginning of the century.

During the 1970s, Iraq was the party that took the initiative in approaching the former rulers of Kuwait to find such a settlement. But those rulers, encouraged by their foreign allies, insisted that Iraq accept the measures imposed by British colonialism. The Foreign Minister of Iraq visited Kuwait City on a number of occasions in 1972 and 1973 to discuss this issue. The Interior Minister, too, visited Kuwait for the same purpose on 16 May 1978. Several committees were formed without achieving any results.

This chapter on the discussions of this issue was put aside following the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. Immediately after the liberation of Faw, however, and while attending the Algiers Arab Summit, I took the initiative in informing the Foreign Minister of the former regime in Kuwait of our genuine desire to settle the border issue. We were astonished, when there was no prompt response from the regime and we had to wait until early July 1988 when the Foreign Minister of the former regime visited Iraq to agree that the subject be discussed by the two Foreign Ministers.

The talks between the two sides were delayed because of my preoccupation with the Iraq-Iran negotiations following the ceasefire. The President of Iraq decided to send the Vice-Chairman of the Revolution Command Council, Mr. Izzat Ibrahim to Kuwait City, on 6 December 1988, to urge the former regime there to resume the talks. It was agreed that our RCC Vice-Chairman would represent our side while the Crown Prince of the former regime would represent theirs.

The visit of Vice-Chairman Ibrahim was returned by Sa'ad al-Abdullah on 6 February 1989, but it was clear that he was not prepared to consider even the minimum of Iraq's legitimate demands.

On 27 March 1989, Sa'ud al-Usaimi, the Minister of State for external affairs of the former regime, visited Baghdad and officially proposed that the talks on this issue be postponed. During the visit made by the Sheikh of Kuwait to Baghdad in September 1989, President Saddam Hussein proposed to him that the border talks be resumed. It was agreed

that the matter be pursued between Deputy Prime Minister Sa'doun Hammadi and the Foreign Minister of the former regime. Dr. Hammadi visited Kuwait City on 19 November 1989 to discuss the subject. The Foreign Minister of the former regime did not reciprocate the visit until February 1990.

It ought to be mentioned here that the former rulers of Kuwait had in fact exploited the situation throughout the period during which the settlement of this issue remained pending . They exploited Iraq's internal and regional preoccupations, the last and most pressing of which being the Iran-Iraq war which lasted eight years. They expanded northwards, setting up police-posts, military installations, farms and oil rigs. In 1963, for instance, the check-point for crossing from Kuwait to Basrah was a place called **al-Mitlaa'** where passports were stamped. But during the time in which Iraq was preoccupied with internal and regional problems, this check-point was gradually moved up to a place more than seventy kilometers to the north of **al-Mitlaa'** to present Iraq with a **fait accompli**.

**Dear colleague,**

As to the political and economic aspects of the issue, I wish to point out the following:

In February 1990, **President Saddam Hussein** delivered a speech at **the Amman Summit** in which he warned against the continued presence of the US navy in the Arab Gulf, now that the war between Iraq and Iran had come to an end. **President Hussein** stated that:

the continued US presence in the Gulf is due to the fact that the Gulf, in view of the developments witnessed in international politics and in the prospect of the oil market and of the increasing need for oil by the United States, Europe, Japan, and perhaps even the Soviet Union, has become the most important spot in the region. Indeed it may have become the most important spot in the whole world. The country, therefore, that succeeds in wielding the biggest share of influence over the region, through the Arab Gulf and its oil, will secure to itself an unchallenged supremacy as a superpower. This means that, unless the people of the Gulf and all the Arabs are aware, the Gulf region will become subject to the will of the United States. The situation may get to the point where, if the debilitation and unawareness continue the United States will try to dictate the level of oil and gas production for each country, the amount sold to this or that country, and the price at which it is to be sold, all in accordance with the special interests of the United States and regardless of the interests of others.

Following the President's speech, a feverish campaign was launched against Iraq by US and other

Zionist-influenced circles in the West. It soon became clear that those circles intended to corner Iraq politically and in the mass media in preparation for a military strike to be implemented by Israel to destroy Iraq's military power which those circles considered to have upset the strategic balance in the region, the balance that had previously been in Israel's favour.

The price of oil, at the time of the President's speech in Amman, was somewhere between \$18 and \$21 per barrel. Immediately afterwards, we saw the rulers of Kuwait, supported by those of the Emirates, suddenly announce their demand for an increase in their OPEC quotas. Before waiting for the matter to be discussed in OPEC, they proceeded to flood the oil market through overproduction, bringing about a sharp fall in prices and a rapid decline in Iraq's already debilitated revenues. The price of oil went down to \$11 per barrel, which meant a reduction of several billion dollars in Iraq's income, at a time when the country was encountering the very heavy economic burden left by the costs of the war.

Iraq sought to draw attention, by diplomatic means and through bilateral contacts, to the

destructive consequences to its economy because of this policy. Iraq dispatched envoys to Kuwait, the Emirates, Saudi Arabia and other countries; but all was to no avail.

At the Baghdad Arab Summit Conference which was held over the period 28-30 May 1990, President Saddam Hussein, in the presence of all the leaders, warned against this policy during a closed session on 30 May 1990. The President said:

**War occurs sometimes through soldiers and damage is inflicted by explosives, killings or coup attempts: At others times was occurs through economic means. To those who don no intend to wage war against Iraq, I say that this is a kind of war against Iraq.**

The behaviour of the former rulers of Kuwait and of the Emirates, however, did not change. They continued to flood the market with oil and to destabilize the oil prices. Iraq again took the initiative, late in June 1990, in sending Deputy Prime Minister Sa'doun Hammadi to deliver letters from President Saddam Hussein to King Fahd, Jabir al-Ahmed and Sheikh Zayid. Iraq



proposed that a summit meeting be held amongst the four parties (Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates and Kuwait), with a view to arriving at an acceptable settlement of the problem. King Fahd, however, and both the former ruler of Kuwait and the ruler of the Emirates, evaded such a meeting and accepted instead that the meeting should be on the level of oil ministers. The four oil ministers met on 10 July 1990, and the Saudi, Kuwaiti and Emirate ministers pretended to accept a return to the level of production in agreed in OPEC quotas.

No sooner had the meeting ended than the oil minister of the former regime in Kuwait announced that his regime would again demand an increase in its share in October next. This was meant to sabotage the positive results of the meeting in order to continue the conspiracy to destroy the Iraqi economy.

In his national address of 16 July 1990, **President Saddam Hussein** reiterated his warning against the new type of conspiracy being perpetrated against Iraq through certain Arab quarters. The President said:

Because the people of Iraq, who have suffered this deliberate injustice, have enough faith in their right to self-defence and the defence of their rights, they shall never forget the saying: "Rather heads be cut off, than sustenance." If words fail to provide protection, then decisive action must be taken to restore the usurped rights to their owners.

President Hussein pointed out in that same address that the loss incurred by Iraq, since the beginning of the slump in oil prices from \$28 to \$11 per barrel, had amounted to \$14 billion. All this was due to the policy of flooding the world market with cheap oil which in turn replenished the strategic reserves of the United States whose need for imported oil had already witnessed a marked increase in recent times.--- This policy caused huge damage to the national economy and was a treacherous stab in the back for Iraq.

For, although Iraq emerged victorious from a very long and costly war, it was burdened with huge debts which had to be repaid. Iraq had also to continue its development plans and provide food for the its people; who had endured much and sacrificed

the flower of its youth in defending its national and pan-Arab security and in protecting the Gulf region from advancing the Iranian danger.

Prior to that, His Excellency the president had voiced a clear warning on 9 July 1990, when he received Mr. Hisham Nazir, the Saudi oil minister to whom the President said:

**I shall not allow myself to accept for the people of Iraq to go hungry and for the women of Iraq to go naked of need.**

On 15 July 1990, I delivered a detailed note to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States in Tunis, a note substantiated by facts and figures confirming the involvement of the former rulers of Kuwait in the conspiracy to destroy the economy of Iraq, and exposing their deliberate and incessant violations, over the years, of the rights and vital interests of Iraq.

Amongst the things pointed out in that note, copies of which were sent to you through our diplomatic channels, was the following:

The aggression of government of Kuwait, against Iraq has been two-fold; by encroaching upon our territories and oilfields, and by stealing our national wealth, such action is tantamount to military aggression. The Kuwaiti government's deliberate attempts bring down the Iraqi economy is an aggression no smaller, in the it's cosequences, than a military aggression.

Following President Hussein's address of 16 July 1990 and my note of 15 July 1990 to the Secretary-General of the Arab League, a number of Arab leaders intervned to help resolve this issue. It was agreed that a meeting be held on 30 July 1990 in Jeddah between His Excellency the Vice-Chairman of the Revolution Command Council and the Crown Prince of the former regime of Kuwait.

Many true Arabs who were eager to see an acceptable settlement being acheived, expected the rulers of Kuwait would in that meeting abandon their arrogance, intransigence and their attempts to harm Iraq. The behaviour of the delegation of the Kuwaiti regime during the meeting was marked, however, by their prevarication, procrastination and a flagrant denial of Iraq's obvious and legitimate rights.

Thus the conclusion was confirmed that the former regime in Kuwait was bent on perpetrating its design to destroy the Iraqi economy and destabilize its political system. It is inconceivable, that such a small regime could entertain the perpetration of a conspiracy of this dimension against a big and strong country like Iraq without being supported by a great power. That power was the United States of America.

This dangerous conspiracy against Iraq led us to extend military assistance to the young revolutionaries of Kuwait in their uprising on 2 August 1990. On the following day, His Majesty King Hussein of the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan, visited Iraq and informed President Saddam Hussein that he had made intensified contacts with a number of Arab leaders, and that there was a proposal for a small summit to be held in Jeddah on the 4th or 5th of August and attended by Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Yemen and Saudi Arabia. President Saddam Hussein accepted the idea of this summit which was also confirmed during the visit made to Iraq on 4 August 1990, by His Excellency Mr. Ali Abdullah Saleh, President of the Republic of Yemen.

This summit, which was to be held during the evening of Saturday, the 4th of August, or on Sunday the 5th, did not take place because of **the intervention of the United States of America**. On the very day for which the Arab Summit had been scheduled, **President Bush** asked his Defence Secretary to visit Saudi Arabia seeking the King's approval for US forces to be invited to Saudi Arabia. The US Defence Secretary arrived in Jeddah in the morning of 6 August and the US forces began entering Saudi Arabia on 7 August, the very next day. The speed with which the operation was started confirms two basic facts. The first, is that there was already a US military plan to ensure US domination of the Gulf region, (This has been confirmed by former US officials including Zbigniew Brzezinski), and this was the right time for its implementation. The second fact is that the United States deliberately aborted an Arab solution to the problem proposed for discussion at the planned Jeddah Summit of 5 August, 1990.

One day after the arrival of the US forces in Saudi Arabia, the government of Egypt proposed, on 8 August, that an Emergency Arab Summit Conference be held in Cairo. The call for this Summit was made

without prior consultation with Iraq at least ascertain whether President Saddam Hussein would be able to go to Cairo. Neither did we receive an official invitation from the host country nor from the Secretariat of the League of Arab States as required by the regular procedures.

Despite this aberrant behaviour on the part of the Egyptian Government, an Iraqi delegation went to Cairo, headed by RCC member and First-Deputy Prime Minister **Mr. Taha Yassin Ramadhan** and including two other RCC members, DPM and Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and DPM Dr. Sa'doun Hammadi. On arrival in Cairo, the Iraqi delegation requested a meeting with **President Mubarak**. During the meeting, the Egyptian President assured the head of the Iraqi delegation that the objective of the summit was to conduct a "dialogue". Before the opening session on the next day, and prior to any consultation being conducted amongst the leaders present, the member-states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, along with Egypt and other states, presented a paper supporting the Saudi invitation to the US forces to Saudi Arabia and calling on other Arab states to send forces there too. This created resentment amongst the other leaders attending the summit, who demanded that the paper be

withdrawn in order to enable the conference to enter into a serious dialogue. The Egyptian President, however, prevented any dialogue from being conducted in search of an acceptable solution. He forced the draft paper to a vote in a manner unprecedented in Arab conferences. This was how the second attempt at an Arab solution to the problem was aborted. The following states either voted against the paper, abstained or expressed their reservations on it: Jordan, the Yemen, Palestine, the Sudan, Libya, Algeria, Mauritania and Tunisia which had boycotted the meeting all together.

Dear colleague,

This historical and factual presentation makes clear the fact that the issue in question is not merely a dispute over ordinary economic or border matters. We had tolerated such differences or disputes for twenty years, a period during which we sought to maintain the best of relations with the former rulers of Kuwait, in spite of their wicked conduct against Iraq. What we are dealing with now is a premeditated conspiracy, in which the former rulers of Kuwait participated wilfully and in accordance with



a plan supported by the United States of America, to destabilize the Iraqi economy and undermine its defence capabilities and the potential with which to face the Israeli-Imperialist scheme of aggression and expansionism against the Arab homeland, the scheme aimed at imposing US hegemony over the region and its oil wealth in particular. This was in fact, as described in President Hussein's statement at the Baghdad Arab Summit and in my letter to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, a war waged against Iraq.

As regards Iraq's relations with the other states of the region, including Saudi Arabia, none of them offer a case similar in any way to that of Kuwait both from the point of view of history and in terms of the nature of the bilateral relations. We have been keen to establish normal relations with all these states, and have been committed to all our obligations towards them within the framework of our fraternal links. We are keen to maintain these commitments for as long as the states concerned maintain their commitments.

In view of the spurious allegations concerning the so-called Iraqi threats to Saudi Arabia, we have

affirmed in every way available to us that there is no Iraqi threat to Saudi Arabia or to any other country in the Gulf. We have made clear our willingness to provide all necessary guarantees required to that effect, whether on the bilateral level or within the framework of the League of Arab States. We have also stated that we would not object to Saudi Arabia calling in Arab forces for assistance or protection, if the Saudis were afraid, although we still see no basis whatsoever for this fabricated fear.

Another chapter of the problem is to do with the Security Council and the position it has adopted. On the first day of the events, the United States pushed the Security Council into adopting a resolution against Iraq on the basis of Chapter VII of the UN Charter. I am referring here to resolution 660 of 2 August 1990, which has no precedent of its kind in the whole history of the Security Council. The Council adopted this resolution without even giving Iraq the chance to be heard. It has always been normal practice in the Security Council, while dealing with international crises, to invite the Foreign Ministers of the parties concerned to attend the Council meetings before a resolution is adopted. It was

obvious that everything was being conducted under feverish US pressure. On the 6th of August, another unprecedented resolution was adopted to impose unjust sanctions against Iraq. Then three other resolutions were adopted for the same purpose. These were resolution 662 (9 August), resolution 664 (18 August) and resolution 665 (25 August, 1990). It was obvious that the United States had launched a full-scale campaign in which it exercised, overtly and covertly, all forms of pressure, intimidation and threats, economic and otherwise, in trying to get member-states to vote for those resolutions proposed by the United States.

On 12 August 1990, **President Saddam Hussein** announced an initiative in which he called for all outstanding issues in the region to be settled on the basis of the same criteria and principles. **He expressed his genuine hope that this initiative would open the door for just and peaceful solutions of all the problems in the region.** Western countries, however, rejected this initiative even before inquiring about it or asking for a copy of the text, thus confirming the double-standard they apply to regional and international disputes in comparison with their position towards Israel. These countries have

never urged the Security Council to implement against Israel the many resolutions already adopted on the question of Palestine, its people and their rights. This has been their position despite the fact that Israel has been occupying the land of Palestine for several decades and continues to massacre the Palestinian people in all brutality while still occupying the Golan Heights of Syria and Southern Lebanon.

Iraq hereby warns against the dangers of the US scheme to impose its hegemony on the Arab nation, plunder its resources and prevent its development and progress. To allow the United States a free hand in dealing with regional problems in such an arrogant and contemptuous manner, while implicating other countries along with it, is a matter that constitutes a grave threat to international peace and security, the damages of which will not be confined to the interests of the developing third world countries, but will also affect Europe, Japan and all countries seeking to achieve independence in their positions and decisions.

As I address this message to Your Excellency, I trust that the situation shall be studied carefully, taking all facts and factors into consideration. I also hope that the international community shall

cooperate in their efforts to confront the policy of aggression and adventurism being imposed by the United States of America upon Iraq and the region as a whole; the region that has, for decades bitterly suffered from the US policy of hegemony and blackmail, and from the infamous alliance forged between the United States and Israel.

I hope that you shall consider dealing seriously with the historic initiative announced by President Saddam Hussein on 12 August 1990, and with the sincere Arab efforts aimed at finding comprehensive Arab solutions to the problems of the region.

I assure you that Iraq, with its faith in peace and justice, shall remain faithful to its belief in dialogue and in the constructive exchange of views with regard to all bilateral, regional and international issues.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(signed)  
Tariq Aziz  
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